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300738Z Jan 01

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INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AGRE-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CEA-01	CIAE-00
	COME-00	CTME-00	DODE-00	WHA-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00
	EUR-00	EXIM-01	E-00	VC-00	FRB-00	H-01	TEDE-00
	INR-00	IO-00	ITC-01	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01
	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00
	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00
	USIE-00	BBG-00	R-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02
	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/013W			

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8123
INFO DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000573

SIPDIS

ILAB FOR RSHEPHARD
LONDON FOR CGURNEY
PARIS FOR B WILLIAMS
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER
PASS USAID FOR AFR/SD - DWELLER, AFR/SA - CPALMA,
NNEWMAN, AA/AFR

E.O. 12958: DECL 01/30/11

TAGS: [ELAB PREL](#) [EAGR PGOV PREL](#) [EAID ZI](#)

SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE LABOR FEDERATION LEADER SEEKS TO SEVER
LABOR'S TIES TO THE OPPOSITION MDC

REF: 00 HARARE 3680

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D' AFFAIRES EARL M. IRVING FOR
REASONS 1.5 (B/D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: THE ZIMBABWE CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (ZCTU) WILL HOLD ITS FIVE-YEAR CONGRESS IN FEBRUARY. THE CONGRESS WILL FOCUS ON ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES, AND ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL TOPICS. THE ISSUE OF ZCTU TIES TO THE OPPOSITION MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC) WILL NOT BE A FORMAL AGENDA ITEM, BUT WILL BE INDIRECTLY RAISED VIA THE PROPOSAL THAT LEADERS OF POLITICAL PARTIES CANNOT ALSO BE MEMBERS OF THE ZCTU EXECUTIVE COUNCIL. WE BELIEVE THAT IF THE ACTING SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ZCTU, WHO IS WIDELY CONSIDERED TO BE PRO-ZANU-PF, IS ELECTED AS SECRETARY-GENERAL, HE WILL SEEK TO SEVER ALL TIES BETWEEN THE ZCTU AND THE MDC. END SUMMARY.

12. (U) ON JANUARY 10, LABOFF MET WITH THE ACTING SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ZCTU, ISIDORE ZINDOGA, TO

SIPDIS

DISCUSS THE UPCOMING CONGRESS TO BE HELD FEBRUARY 23-25 IN MASVINGO. THE ZCTU IS AN UMBRELLA LABOR ORGANIZATION COMPRISING 31 AFFILIATED UNIONS. THE OPPOSITION MDC HAD ITS ROOTS IN THE ZCTU, AND MUCH OF THE MDC LEADERSHIP STILL FORMALLY HOLDS POSITIONS IN THE ZCTU.

13. (SBU) LABOFF DURING THE MEETING QUERIED ZINDOGA ON
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THE AGENDA OF THE CONGRESS, AND SPECIFICALLY IF THE CONGRESS WOULD DISCUSS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ZCTU AND THE MDC. ZINDOGA STATED THAT THE CONGRESS WAS GOING TO DEAL PRINCIPALLY WITH UNION ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES, AS WELL AS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICY ISSUES. HE TOLD US THERE WILL BE FOUR PRINCIPAL AGENDA ITEMS:

A) ELECTING THE EXECUTIVE AND GENERAL COUNCILS OF THE ZCTU FOR THE NEXT FIVE-YEAR PERIOD. THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CONSISTS OF A SECRETARY-GENERAL, TWO ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERALS, FOUR PRESIDENTS, AND A TREASURER.

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THE GENERAL COUNCIL INCLUDES THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AND TEN OTHER MEMBERS FROM INDIVIDUAL UNIONS. THE GENERAL COUNCIL IS CONVENED IN LIEU OF A CONGRESS WHENEVER THERE ARE ACTIONS TO BE VOTED ON THAT THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL PROPOSES TAKING;

B) REVIEWING THE ZCTU'S FINANCIAL BASE WITH THE GOAL OF ENSURING THAT THE ORGANIZATION WILL HAVE A SOUND FINANCIAL FOOTING FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS;

C) DETERMINING THE ZCTU'S POSITIONS ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POLICIES, IN ORDER TO PROTECT AND FURTHER WORKERS INTERESTS;

D) FINDING WAYS TO STRENGTHEN THE ZCTU AND ITS AFFILIATED UNIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF ZIMBABWE'S SEVERE ECONOMIC DECLINE.

14. (SBU) ZINDOGA STATED THAT ONLY UNDER THE LAST AGENDA ITEM WOULD THE ZCTU'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MDC COME UP.
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HE WAS EMPHATIC THAT THERE IS NO LINKAGE BETWEEN THE ZCTU AND THE MDC, DESPITE THE CENTRAL ROLE THAT THE ZCTU HAD IN THE FORMATION OF THE MDC. ACCORDING TO ZINDOGA, A GROUP OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FORMATION OF THE MDC. HE STATED THAT SOME MEMBERS OF THE ZCTU, INDEPENDENT OF THEIR AFFILIATION WITH THE ORGANIZATION, BECAME HEAVILY INVOLVED IN THE MDC. ZINDOGA ADDED THAT THE CONGRESS WILL ADDRESS THIS PERCEPTION OF A ZCTU CONNECTION TO THE MDC BY DISCUSSING HOW THE ZCTU CAN BEST STRENGTHEN ITSELF AS AN INDEPENDENT LABOR ORGANIZATION. ZINDOGA'S OWN VIEW IS THAT UNION MEMBERS SUPPORT DIFFERENT POLITICAL PARTIES, THEREFORE, THE ZCTU MUST KEEP ITSELF ABOVE THE POLITICAL FRAY BY REMAINING INDEPENDENT OF ANY LINKAGE, OR PERCEPTION OF A LINKAGE, WITH ANY SPECIFIC POLITICAL PARTY.

15. (SBU) ZINDOGA STATED WHEN THE CONGRESS CONSIDERS THE ELECTION OF THE NEXT EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, IT WILL ALSO ADDRESS WHETHER A POLITICAL PARTY LEADER OR EXECUTIVE CAN BE A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AT THE SAME TIME. HIS OPINION IS THAT THE CONGRESS SHOULD DISALLOW THIS FOR TWO REASONS: THE ZCTU WISHES TO REMAIN AN ORGANIZATION INDEPENDENT OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR INFLUENCE, AND BEING A MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IS A FULL-TIME RESPONSIBILITY THAT REQUIRES MEMBERS TO

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DEVOTE ALL THEIR ENERGIES TO ZCTU BUSINESS. ZINDOGA TOLD LABOFF THAT HE WILL BE A CANDIDATE FOR THE POSITION OF SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ZCTU. IF ELECTED, HE STATED HE WOULD WORK FOR A SOCIAL CONTRACT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE (GOZ), LABOR AND BUSINESS IN ORDER TO STABILIZE PRICES AND WAGES, AND TO AID IN NATIONAL ECONOMIC RECOVERY WHILE ALSO DEVELOPING NATIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS.

16. (C) ZINDOGA HAS LEGITIMATE UNION CREDENTIALS HAVING BEEN INVOLVED IN UNION ORGANIZING AND MANAGEMENT HIS ENTIRE PROFESSIONAL LIFE. IN ADDITION TO BEING ACTING SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ZCTU, HE IS SECRETARY-GENERAL

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OF THE ZIMBABWE LEATHER WORKERS UNION. HE TOLD LABOFF THAT HE IS NOT PARTICULARLY CONCERNED WHETHER HE WILL BE ELECTED SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ZCTU, DUE TO HIS POSITION WITH THE LEATHER WORKERS UNION. GEBRE GEBREMARIAM, THE AMCIT REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE AFL-CIO SOLIDARITY CENTER HERE IN HARARE, TOLD LABOFF HE BELIEVES THAT ZINDOGA IS CLEARLY PRO-ZANU-PF, BUT THAT HE ALSO HAS THE ZCTU'S AND AFFILIATED UNIONS' INTERESTS AT HEART.

16. (C) COMMENT: ALTHOUGH ALLEGATIONS HAVE BEEN REPEATEDLY RAISED THAT ZINDOGA IS PRO-ZANU-PF OR A CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATION (CIO) PLANT (DISCUSSED REFTTEL), HE PRESENTS A CONVINCING IMAGE AS A CONCERNED TRADE UNIONIST AND DOES NOT COME ACROSS AS A RULING
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PARTY HACK. HOWEVER, ZINDOGA'S INSISTENCE THAT THERE IS NO LINKAGE OF ANY KIND BETWEEN ZCTU AND THE MDC IS HARDLY TENABLE, AS THE OPPOSITION PARTY DEFINITELY HAD ITS ROOTS IN THE ZCTU, AND COUNTS ON THE LABOR FEDERATIONS STRUCTURES AND THE SUPPORT OF ITS MOSTLY-URBAN, FORMALLY-EMPLOYED MEMBERSHIP.

17. (C) COMMENT CONTINUED: THE CONGRESS AGENDA ITEM STATING THAT MEMBERS OF THE ZCTU EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CANNOT BE IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS OF POLITICAL PARTIES IS CLEARLY AIMED AT REMOVING MDC LEADERS SUCH AS MORGAN TSVANGIRAI (PRESIDENT OF THE MDC WHO IS ON PAID LEAVE AS

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THE ZCTU SECRETARY-GENERAL) AND ISAAC MATONGO (NATIONAL CHAIRMAN OF THE MDC AND AN ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE ZCTU) FROM THE ZCTU LEADERSHIP. WE STRONGLY SUSPECT THAT ZINDOGA MAY BE DOING THE BIDDING OF ZANU-PF IN HIS CURRENT POSITION, WHICH WOULD BE GLAD TO SEE THE TIES BETWEEN THE ZCTU AND THE MDC SEVERED. IF ZINDOGA IS ELECTED SECRETARY-GENERAL AND SUCCEEDS AT SEVERING THE TIES, IT WOULD BE A SEVERE BLOW TO THE MDC'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH, AND ITS ABILITY TO MOUNT A NATIONAL CAMPAIGN IN THE 2002 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.
END COMMENT.

IRVING

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